



Colman School Parking Lot Improvement Project Public Meeting #1 Summary Notes

The first public meeting for the Colman School Parking Lot improvement project was held on April 3, 2003, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM in Thurgood Marshall Elementary School's auditorium. The meeting was attended by approximately 20 participants.

Susanne Friedman, Parks Project Planner welcomed the group for attending the meeting and outlined that this was the first of a series of public meetings that Parks would be having to get community input on the Colman Parking Lot project design. Joe Nieford and Karen Galt, Parks project landscape architects for the project, were introduced. Cheryl Fraser, Parks sector manager for the area, was also in attendance.

Objectives for the evening were:

- ◆ to give the community a working knowledge of the project,
- ◆ to let the community know what the project timeline is and where the opportunities are for public input,
- ◆ to hear the communities input on the different program elements presented.

The Project Goal for the project is to...

- ◆ develop an integrated design for the parking lot that is flexible,
- ◆ that is more pedestrian and neighborhood friendly, and
- ◆ that provides access to old Colman School and Sam Smith Park.

Project Budget & Background

In 2000, the citizens of Seattle approved the ProParks Levy. \$309,000 is allocated from the ProParks Levy for the Colman School Parking Lot Project. Funding covers all project costs, such as, construction, planning, design, overhead, consultant fees and drawings, public outreach, project management, city taxes and contingency.

Coordination

Parks is coordinating its design with the Urban Leagues redevelopment project at Old Colman School. Parks is also coordinating with State and City agencies on access and use issues.

Schedule

The schedule listed below is our current project schedule. Depending on the final design and potential funding sources, Parks may decide to complete portions of the project in a phased approach, which may extend the construction and completion timeframe.

Planning	Design	Construction	Completion
2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005

Community Involvement

Seattle Parks and Recreation will work with the community and the Urban League to develop an integrated design plan for the Colman School Parking Lot through a series of public meetings held between April '03 and July '03.

Ms. Friedman went over the Input and Decision-Making Matrix, pointing out which points were internal Parks review and which were public meetings. She also outlined that the final design program would be decided upon at the Parks Division Director level after considering recommendations from staff and community input at public meetings.

Site Analysis

Karen Galt, Parks Project Landscape Architect then went over the site analysis and design opportunities and challenges; pointing out key site elements such as the fantastic view of Mount Rainier and the imposing retaining wall surrounding the site. Opening the site up visually and physically can be accomplished by taking down some of the existing fencing and retaining walls. Reestablishing connections to the surrounding neighborhood, Colman School, Colman Playfield and Sam Smith park are key.

Potential Elements

In keeping with the levy language, project improvements will address a wide range of issues. Joe Neiford, Parks Project Landscape Architect, described the Key Elements and outlined several concept ideas and ways in which the elements might play out on the site. Some elements were shown with a range of sizes, such as the open space component, the skatepark and possible climbing wall. The landscaped areas could be implemented in an unlimited number of combinations.

Elements presented included:

Pedestrian accessibility

- ◆ Across South Massachusetts
- ◆ Overall ADA accessibility
- ◆ To the school and Sam Smith park

Recreation opportunities

- ◆ Skatepark design
- ◆ Climbing wall
- ◆ Soccer cages
- ◆ Basketball courts
- ◆ Open green space for independent use

Landscape improvements

- ◆ Landscape connections to Sam Smith Park
- ◆ Organize open space into flexible use areas

Vehicular accessibility

- ◆ Parking lot reconfiguration and vehicular circulation
- ◆ Parking capacity for Parks scheduled soccer games
- ◆ Overflow parking for the school's redevelopment

Community Questions and Comments

The community was encouraged to interject, stop and comment throughout the presentation and follow up discussion. The comments listed below were captured from the entire meeting. In some instances, comments were summarized and group according to topic.

General Comments -

- ◆ Want to maintain vehicular entrance from S. Massachusetts Ave.
- ◆ visibility on and from S. Massachusetts Ave
- ◆ The soccer cages would only be used by people within walking distance and would have limited use
- ◆ The I-90 trail may bring lots of bike users
- ◆ the northwest corner would be good for a climbing wall
- ◆ would like the design to have an organic feel and softness to it, with pedestrian access,
- ◆ change the topography
- ◆ the southeast corner retaining wall is a perfect place/opportunity for some art work
- ◆ opening up the southeast corner of the retaining wall is a good idea
- ◆ will the urban league provide public restrooms?
- ◆ Would like to see more 'natural' park elements
- ◆ Emphasize benefits of joint planning with the urban league

Has Parks considered -

- ◆ a M.O.D. soccer field, kids soccer
- ◆ bocce ball courts
- ◆ a comfort station
- ◆ a drinking fountain
- ◆ a sculptural or artistic component
- ◆ bike racks
- ◆ more native vegetation
- ◆ having a passive park with no parking lot or skatepark etc.
- ◆ the insurance costs

Concern was expressed over -

- ◆ possible covered spaces being a security issue
- ◆ noise levels with a possible skatepark
- ◆ sounds need to be buffered with vegetation and burms
- ◆ a climbing wall in the northwest corner, may or may not contribute to noise levels
- ◆ the possibility of bringing different user groups into conflict
- ◆ no event/activity lighting
- ◆ the turf area north of the site gets used by soccer teams for warm up and that's where families gather to watch the games and to have picnics.
- ◆ the projects timelines and being in sync for construction
- ◆ the cost to remove portions of the retaining walls; would rather Parks put its money into amenities vs. circulation.
- ◆ No bmx bikes
- ◆ having a vehicular entrance off of 25th Ave S. – encourage cars on S. Massachusetts, not on 25th Ave.
- ◆ having dual vehicular access points could be a problem
- ◆ Why is Parks providing parking for the Urban League?
- ◆ Why is Parks providing parking at all?

Skatepark -

- ◆ What will be the nature of the skatepark? Is it a destination spot?
- ◆ Make sure it fits into the context of the residential area.
- ◆ Would like the hours of operation to be limited to daylight hours.
- ◆ Would like to see diversity in users and age groups – for skatepark design
- ◆ There is a dearth of active facilities for kids that provide individualistic opportunities – skateparks provide that.
- ◆ Design plays a big role in the overall safety of a skatepark – there are lots of local designers who have experience with this.
- ◆ There is sculptural potential in designing the skatepark itself.
- ◆ Is it possible to have a skatepark at Colman School playfield instead?

Next Steps & Summary

Parks staff will be presenting Refined Concept Alternatives based on feedback from the first community meeting. Key issues include: vehicular access on to the site, noise modification through landscape design, inclusion of organic components in the design layout, and overall design fit within the neighborhood and contextual uses. Staff will outline the project budget and phasing ideas and would like the community to come to consensus on one site plan for further refinement and presentation at the third public meeting.

Our second public meeting will be held on:

**May 15, 2003,
Thurgood Marshal Elementary School Auditorium,
6:30-8:30 p.m.**

Contact Information

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